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~~DENY~~AFFIDAVIT OF JOSE I. O. LETELIER MOREL

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Chile Project (#S199900030)
 U.S. Department of State
 Release Excise Deny X
 Declassify: In Part In Full
 Exemption(s) B6

SS 578-90-8491

In the Fall of 1976 at the age of 17, I had just entered my freshman year at the University of Maryland. On September 21, 1976 my father, Orlando Letelier was assassinated in Washington D.C. while driving to work. This event and the loss of my father affected my life in the following manner.

The "event" of the assassination itself affected me deeply, due to the brutal way in which it was executed; in addition, the event planted terror and fear in the heart and mind. The fear was felt not only by those more directly involved, but by everyone who saw these images on the evening news that day. At the time, I was working part-time for Sears Roebuck & Co. as a credit authorizer at the Regional Center. Shortly after the event on September 21st, it was suggested that I not return to my job due to security reasons etc... I frankly understood it at the time to be a question of fear struck deep in the hearts of my employers who probably felt that my presence could endanger my co-workers and the company in the event of another terrorist action. They had all in fact heard of the death of Ronnie Karpen Moffitt. Situations such as this were to occur over and over again in the years following the "event". Often I would be discriminated against or marginalized due to this fear. Others associated Orlando Letelier with "communism" as a result of the propaganda and smear campaigns which followed the assassination. This too, did not make life any easier for me as a young man entering college. To live in Washington D. C. in the late 70's and to have the name Letelier was for all practical purposes taboo; it was like having the plague.

As a result, the "event" also created serious economic problems for me and my family. Losing my job, feeling discriminated, made it very difficult for me to face the world each day and to manage to stay in college given the expenses involved. In addition, when I finally managed to get another job, and resume my studies, I felt like I was always being monitored.

By 1979, I had decided to leave Washington D.C. and applied to U.C. Berkeley where I felt the distance and the more liberal attitudes of Northern California would permit me to function more normally.

This decision was very difficult to make and even more difficult to maintain. The separation from my brothers and my widowed mother was particularly difficult. I was however, one of the eldest sons and had turned 21 years of age so I felt that I needed to try to help my mother with the economic burden she was under by quickly becoming an adult and becoming independent. The first years were very difficult and at one point I found myself on welfare in order to feed myself. Eventually, I was able to prove myself as a good student and was able to obtain scholarships and student loans to finance my studies; in 1984 I graduated with a Master's degree and honors from Berkeley.

During those student years, the loss of my father was terribly felt. As a young man, the lack of the father figure, and the feeling of being cheated out of a father due to the brutal event of 1976; I was left with many questions which would remain unanswered, I was left without support, and at times I felt that I was left without hope. Those student years, were difficult due to the burden and the hardships. And while many would argue that such hardships build character, such character is always and only the result of additional restraints and difficulties placed upon oneself within a given environment. Having been always very close to my father I have never really overcome the loss on a personal level and I feel that I was somehow cheated out of many advantages that could have been mine as the son of a man with the political and professional stature attained by Orlando Letelier. His brutal death denied me both the personal lessons I could have gained from him as well as any potential "social position" I could have shared due to his importance as a political leader.

In 1987, I was married and became a father in 1988. The birth of my son "Orlando Ygnacio", brought great joy and hope to me and my wife, however it also helped to open many deep and forgotten wounds. My son Orlando Ygnacio, would never hear his grandfather sing him a melody with that baritone voice for which he was so famous, instead he would have to learn of his grandfather in books and stories along with all the ambiguity inherent in this second hand appraisal. I would not be able to share this beautiful son of mine with him and somehow we would always feel at a loss and alone. My family would never be the same; and as is the case when one has children, the needs provided for by the family would most unfortunately be lacking. In Chilean families the patriarch figure is extremely important because it is on that figure that the entire family, generation after generation is both focused and is through him able to articulate itself.

In 1989, I moved back to Chile with my wife and son in the hope that the new democracy will allow us to prosper. It is here in Chile that I have again felt an enormous disadvantage however. The disarticulation of my family by the loss of my father and the fact that there has not been any justice regarding the assassination here in Chile has made the situation more difficult than I imagined. I returned to Chile after 16 years only to find myself as a sort of orphaned stranger. I am the son of a "historical figure", yet I have become impoverished by the events of the past. In a country where the family is of such importance the Letelier's are basically disbanded. We do not live the lives of the heirs of an important national figure, on the contrary we are unemployed and living on our hard earned savings. It is not difficult for me to compare my situation to that of my peers who are also the sons of important political figures who are still alive; they are all prospering, and rightly so, from the benefits of the new democratic process and all of the connections passed on by their fathers who are senators, cabinet members or the president of Chile.

Chile is a small yet complex country in which the order of the day is "reconciliation". The Letelier case is a sensitive issue within this context. It is felt that at this time opening such a case is like opening pandora's box; that the reconciliation process would be threatened and that a confrontation between the military and civilians could occur as a result. As such, I often find myself in that strange position I had experienced in Washington D.C. shortly after the assassination. While most people would like to see justice prevail the fear of reprisal is still latent in the hearts of most. They would prefer that we all forgot about the Letelier case and that we could find ways of strengthening the democratic process without making waves. This situation is made more difficult by the presence of Letelier family members, such as myself, who are still asking for justice and truth in order to allow for true reconciliation. This doesn't make one very popular. And despite the fact that both me and my wife are professionals with master's degrees from a prestigious university we have not been able to find a job.

In summary, the loss of my father at this point in my life continues to be a hardship. I have returned to my country to find that I am missing a key component in the development of success; I am missing my father, the focus of that important Chilean institution "the family". Furthermore, I am still carrying the burden of the event which occurred at Sheridan Circle in 1976.



José Ignacio Orlando Letelier Morel
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SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO
before me this 26 day of July, 1991

----- *Christopher M. O'Connor* -----
Notary Public

at San Diego, California, July 26, 1991